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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

New Ordinance, Inspectors, Aim to Improve Public Safety on Gulf Shores Beaches

The Gulf Shores City Council tonight passed an Ordinance designating that public beach areas remain clear of tents and shelters, which it deems to “be materially detrimental to public safety, to the enjoyment of Gulf front beaches by residents and visitors to the City, and to the protection, stabilization, and maintenance of beach project sand, sand stabilization structures and vegetation.” It will go into effect March 1st.

“This ordinance will make our beaches safer and more enjoyable for everyone,” said Mayor Robert Craft. “Keeping this area of the beach free from these structures addresses both public safety and beach debris issues. Our aim is to maintain a safe, clean beach. This is one step in ensuring we can continue to do that.”

The designated areas include all public beach areas in the City and any Gulf front beaches south of the Lucido & Oliver line, which coincides with the Mean High Tide line. These areas include beaches seaward of all beachfront homes and condominiums within Gulf Shores Corporate Limits lying west of the Gulf State Park and east of West Eleventh Street.

Director of Recreation & Cultural Affairs Grant Brown said the ordinance is part of a bigger effort the City will undertake this year. “We envision the beach inspectors identified in this ordinance as a key part of an overall program,” he said, “to maintain better contact with and support of the people using our beaches. They will be on the beach to help with communication in emergency situations and to offer public safety information, as well enforcement.

According to Brown, beach markers will be set up along the Mean High Tide Line and will be numbered, to assist the inspectors and others on the beach in giving directions to their location in the event of an emergency. Having this area free of those structures, he said, will make access by inspectors and other emergency vehicles safer and easier. It will also ensure that no structures are abandoned on public beaches, which causes debris and additional safety issues, Brown concluded.

“These are issues that, as more visitors enjoy our beaches,” Brown said, “can become more of a problem. The council is being proactive in trying to address issues like these so as our area’s popularity grows, it’s potential for enjoyment and safety doesn’t diminish.”